



State of Utah

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NEWS RELEASE

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PRIVATE LANDOWNERS JOIN WITH STATE IN EFFORT TO REDUCE DAMAGE FROM FOREST PEST

The Mountain pine beetle is the most destructive pest of pine forests in the western United States. This bark beetle attacks and kills several species of pine tree common to Utah and is currently a threat to pine forests throughout the state.

The Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands has enlisted the aid of more than 145 private landowners in a cost share effort on the north slope of the Uinta Mountains, south of Evanston, Wyoming, to take action to protect their forested lands. Landowners in the following communities are participating, Manorlands, Uintalands, Wilderness Acres 20 and the Bear River Lodge. Using a registered insecticide for use against the pine beetle, a spraying program will be conducted the week of June 23 through 27 in an attempt to minimize damage from this devastating pest.

"The beetle finds a suitable host tree and chews through the outer bark into the underlying tissue," explained Forest Health Coordinator Colleen Keyes. "Once inside the beetle lays its eggs and that begins a cycle that eventually kills the tree.

"Once the beetle gains a foothold in a forest it begins a relentless march unless action is taken to stop it," said Keyes. "Preventive sprays have to be applied before the end of June to have an effect."

A secondary benefit of the spraying program is to reduce the threat of wildland fire in an area already deemed "at risk." The addition of a large number of dead or dying pine trees will add immeasurably to the risk of a catastrophic fire.

The cost share project is being conducted using about \$35,000 in USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection Insect Suppression Funding. The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands provides technical assistance to private landowners.

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